

REMARKS

The present application was filed on June 21, 2001 with claims 1-29. Claims 2, 11, 13, 20 and 29 have been canceled. Claims 1, 3-10, 12, 14-19 and 21-28 remain pending. Claims 1, 12 and 19 are the pending independent claims.

In the outstanding Office Action dated September 7, 2006, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 3-10, 12, 14-19 and 21-28 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,731,308 (hereinafter "Tang"). Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

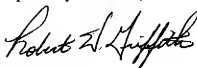
In regard to the rejection of claims 1, 3-10, 12, 14-19 and 21-28 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being unpatentable over Tang, Applicants have amended independent claims 1, 12, and 19 to clarify the subject matter of such claims. Independent claims 1, 12, and 19 now recite a "collaborative system" that "provides direct access to at least a telephone network and internet communications." Furthermore, the claims now recite "using the collaborative system to set up one or more telephone calls via the telephone network that is in communication with the collaborative system to initiate communication with one or more said other participants in said group for said particular collaborative purpose." Support for this amendment can be found on page 3, lines 22-28 of the Specification. Applicants respectfully assert that these amendments adequately distinguish the claims from Tang.

In contrast to Examiner's argument, Tang fails to teach a collaborative system as recited in the claims. Tang makes no mention of a collaborative system that provides direct access to a telephone network. As argued by Examiner, Tang does mention the ability to establish a "telephone link" in the specification (Tang, col. 9, ln. 59-60); however, Applicants respectfully assert that Tang's description is different than what is recited in the independent claims. First, Tang fails to go into detail as to how a telephone link is established. In this respect, Tang cannot anticipate the claims because Tang does not describe the telephone mechanism in detail. Secondly, when Tang is read in its entirety, it is clear that Tang is describing a telephone link which is created via the internet. In contrast to Tang, the independent claims recite a collaborative system that provides direct access to at least a telephone network and internet communications. Tang fails to teach a collaborative system that has direct access to a telephone network. Finally, Tang does not teach a

collaborative system with the ability to set up one or more telephone calls via a telephone network. Tang only describes initiating one telephone link, via the internet, between two users. (Tang, col. 9, ln. 59-60).

For at least these reasons, independent claims 1, 12, and 19 are not anticipated by Tang. It follows that dependent claims 3-10, 14-18, and 21-28 are not anticipated by Tang due to their dependence on claims 1, 12, and 19. Dependent claims 3-10, 14-18, and 21-28 also recite patentable subject matter in their own right. Accordingly, Applicants believe that claims 1, 3-10, 12, 14-19 and 21-28 are in condition for allowance, and respectfully request withdrawal of the §102(e) rejection.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert W. Griffith". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Robert" and last name "Griffith" clearly distinguishable.

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